



FOOD POLICIES IN THE WORKPLACE

What are food policies in the workplace?

Food policies can promote a culture of good health.

Food policies are any decisions, programs or products that a workplace endorses that affect how food is produced, processed, distributed, purchased, protected and disposed.

Examples of food policies are:

- » Decisions on what kinds of healthy foods you stock in your vending machines.
- » Availability of healthy food options from cafeterias, snack bars and concessions.
- » Access to free drinking water.
- » Availability of healthy food and beverages at meetings.
- » Promotion of healthy food options with signs, symbols or other methods.
- » Provision of food preparation and storage areas.
- » Access to nutrition information and education.



What are the benefits of food policies in the workplace?

Money Saved



Health care costs continue to skyrocket. An estimated 25 percent to 30 percent of companies' medical costs per year are spent on employees with the major risk factors for cardiovascular disease such as obesity, hypertension, high cholesterol and triglycerides, and diabetes.



More Productivity

Healthy employees take fewer sick days and perform better when at work. Healthy employees have more energy that allows them to stay focused at work. Healthy employees also have a higher level of self-confidence themselves and inspire confidence in others around them.

Healthier Families

Over 60 percent of adults and teenagers (16 years) in the United States work. The workplace provides an opportunity for encouraging healthier behaviors and preventing chronic diseases. In turn, these behaviors can carry over to the rest of the family.

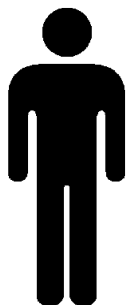
Wealthier Families

Employees and their families share the financial burden through higher contributions to insurance, higher copayments and deductibles, reduction or elimination of coverage, and trade-offs of insurance benefits against wage or salary increases.

Desirable Workplaces

Healthy work environments are good for the company's image and attract the best and brightest employees. Policies that promote good health can be positive recruitment and retention tools.

For example, the case of obesity¹ ...



Normal-weight men miss an average of **3 days each year** due to illness or injury compared to overweight or obese men who miss approximately **2 more work days per year**.



Normal-weight women miss an average of **3.4 days each year** due to illness or injury compared to obese women who miss approximately **5.2 days per year** and very obese women who miss **8.2 more days per year**.

¹CDC. Workplace Health Promotion. Increase Productivity. <http://www.cdc.gov/workplacehealthpromotion/businesscase/benefits/productivity.html>

We all want employees to bring the best of themselves to their jobs every day.